

BLOC-NOTES

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NOVEMBER, 11, 2011



for cegep teachers

THE DEC IN NURSING AN INDISPENSABLE DIPLOMA

At a recent general meeting of the *Ordre des infirmières et des infirmiers du Québec* (OIIQ), the delegates passed a motion that revives a debate that arises time and time again. Championed by the Integrated University Health Networks, the motion, which was adopted by an overwhelming majority, asks the Government to impose the obligation for nurses to earn a Bachelor of Nursing degree in order to join the profession.

Why adopt such a position? Who is complaining about the work being done by nurses with a DEC? Did you know that college graduates with a DEC are the ones who get the best marks on OIIQ exams?

Employing the pretext of globalization and manpower mobility, and basing their case on the university training given to nurses in other Canadian Provinces, in France and elsewhere around the world, this motion flies in the face of the excellent training that has been given in our CEGEPs for some 40 years now.

Training that is updated and adapted

The college training program is based upon skills that are educed from analyses of the work place. The program is updated regularly taking the profession's evolution into account. Far from us to argue that nothing could be improved in this program, but before we consider modifying how people get into the profession, there would be, in our opinion, other aspects that should be considered. "Working conditions are currently deplorable, the Government's tolerance of private agencies gives rise to a veritable waste of public money and work organization could clearly benefit from adjustments that nurses have been rightfully advocating. However, we're convinced

that requiring nurses to hold a Bachelors degree will not improve the situation", affirms Micheline Thibodeau, FNEEQ Vice-President.

The DEC-BAC, a well established path

Continuing one's education at the university level already attracts 30% of the people who earn their DEC in nursing. But from there to making it mandatory to earn a Bachelors degree to access the profession, there is leap that we are not at all prepared to take: college nursing graduates still play a key role in our health care institutions. Moreover, last October 20, the *regroupement* CEGEP delegates passed a motion to maintain the DEC in Nursing as an adequate diploma for people to join the profession.

A wave of support

Editorialists have questioned the relevance of requiring a Bachelors degree and suggest circumspection in addressing this matter. The Collège Shawinigan, John-Abbott College, CEGEP de Granby-Haute-Yamaska, Collège Montmorency Board of Directors, amongst others, have publicly taken a stand in favour of keeping the DEC in Nursing. Meanwhile, the Minister of Health and Social Services, Yves Bolduc, has indicated some openness to the OIIQ's proposal, but seems to prefer a gradual approach to making this happen. The FNEEQ will defend the necessity that we maintain the DEC in Nursing as a final qualifying diploma.

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